

THIS WE BELIEVE

All churches have creeds. Faith always expresses itself in witness. We believe therefore we confess.

At Blythefield, the Bible is our rule of faith and practice. Our confession is our response to God's Word. It is a simple statement of what we believe with a reference to the Bible texts that elicit our response.

It offers a summary of the doctrine of the Bible, is an aid to understanding, a bond of union, a catechism for children, and a standard and guard against false doctrine.

Article I THE SCRIPTURES

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men controlled by the Holy Spirit¹; that it has truth without any admixture of error for its matter²; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; the true center of Christian union and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions should be tried.³

Explanatory

By *The Holy Bible*, we mean that collection of sixty-six books, from Genesis to Revelation, which, as originally written, does not merely contain and convey the word of God, but is the very Word of God.

By *Inspiration*, we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old, as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or ever will be inspired.

¹ II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:19-21; Acts 1:16, 28:25

² Psalms 119:105, 130, 160; Luke 24:25-27, 44-45; John 17:17

³ Psalms 119:89; Proverbs 30:5-6; Romans 3:4, 15:4; I Peter 1:23; Revelation 22:19; John 5:39, 45-47, 12:48; Isaiah 8:20; Ephesians 6:17; Luke 16:31; Psalms 19:7-11

Article II THE TRUE GOD

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, the maker and supreme ruler of heaven and earth¹; inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love². That in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.³

¹ Exodus 20:2-3; Genesis 17:1; I Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:6; John 4:24; Psalms 83:18, 90:2, 147:5; Jeremiah 10:10

² Exodus 15:11; Revelation 4:11; I Timothy 1:17; Romans 11:33; Mark 12:30

³ Matthew 28:19; John 10:30, 15:26, 17:5; I Corinthians 2:10-11, 12:2-6, I John 5:7, Acts 5:3-4; Philippians 2:5-6; Ephesians 2:18; II Corinthians 13:14

Article III

THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine person; equal with God the Father¹ and God the Son² and of the same nature³; that He was active in the creation⁴; that in His relation to the unbelieving world He restrains the Evil one until God's purpose is fulfilled⁵; that He convicts of sin, of judgment and of righteousness⁶; that He bears witness to the Truth of the Gospel in preaching testimony⁷; that He is the agent in the New Birth⁸; that He seals, baptizes, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, and helps the believer.⁹

And that the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance) is the evidence of His indwelling rather than the speaking in tongues and other spectacular demonstrations.

¹John 14:16-17

²Matthew 28:19

³Hebrews 9:14; John 14:26; Luke 1:35

⁴Genesis 1:1-3

⁵II Thessalonians 2:7

⁶John 16:8-11

⁷John 15:26-27; Acts 5:30-32

⁸John 3:5-6

⁹Ephesians 1:13-14; Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16, 24:49; John 1:33, 14:26, 16:13; Acts 11:16; Romans 8:14,16, 26-27; II Thessalonians 2:13; I Peter 1:2; Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 5:18-21

Article IV

THE VIRGIN BIRTH

We believe that Jesus Christ, who is God and was with the Father from the beginning, was begotten of the Holy Ghost in a miraculous manner¹; born of Mary, a virgin, as no other man was ever born or can ever be born of woman², and that He is both the Son of God, and God, the Son.³

¹John 1:1,14; Genesis 3:15

²Psalms 2:7; Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Mark 1:1; Luke 1:35; John 12:14; Galatians 4:4

³I Corinthians 15:47; I John 5:20

Article V

THE CREATION

We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and that it is to be accepted literally, and not allegorically or figuratively¹; that man was created directly in God's own image and after his own likeness²; that man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, or development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms³; that all animal and vegetable life was made directly, and God's established law was they should bring forth only *after their kind*.⁴

¹ Genesis 1:1; Exodus 20:11; Acts 4:24; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 11:3; John 1:3; Revelation 10:6; Romans 1:20; Acts 17:23-26; Jeremiah 10:12; Nehemiah 9:6

² Genesis 1:26-27; I Corinthians 11:7

³ Genesis 2:7, 21-23

⁴ Genesis 1:11, 24

Article VI

THE DEVIL, OR SATAN

We believe that Satan was once holy, and enjoyed heavenly honors; but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty¹, fell and drew after him a host of angels²; that he is now the malignant prince of the power of the air, and the unholy god of this world³. We hold him to be man's great tempter⁴, the enemy of God and His Christ⁵, the accuser of the saints⁶, the author of all false religions, the chief power back of the present apostasy⁷; the Lord of the Antichrist⁸, and the author of all powers of darkness⁹ -- destined however to final defeat at the hands of God's Son¹⁰, and to the judgment of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for him and his angels.¹¹

¹ Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:14-17

² Revelation 12:9; Jude 6; II Peter 2:4

³ Ephesians 2:2; John 14:30

⁴ I Peter 5:8; I Thessalonians 3:5; Matthew 4:1,3

⁵ Zechariah 1:3; I John 3:8; Matthew 13:25, 37-39; Luke 22:3-4

⁶ Revelation 12:10

⁷ II Corinthians 11:13-15

⁸ I John 2:22, 4:3; II John 7

⁹ Revelation 13:13,14; II Thessalonians 2:8-11

¹⁰ Revelation 12:7-9, 19:11, 16, 20, 20:1-3

¹¹ Revelation 20:10; Matthew 25:41

Article VII

THE FALL OF MAN

We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker¹, but by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state², in consequence of which, all mankind are now sinners, not only by constraint, but of choice³; and therefore under just condemnation without defense of excuse.⁴

¹ Genesis 3:1-6, 24

² Romans 5:12, 19

³ Romans 1:18, 3:10-19; Ephesians 2:1, 3; Ezekiel 18:19-20

⁴ Romans 1:20, 28, 32; Galatians 3:22

Article VIII

THE ATONEMENT FOR SIN OR WAY OF SALVATION

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace¹ through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon Him our nature, yet without sin, honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and by His death made a full and vicarious atonement for our sins²; that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the Just dying for the unjust, Christ, the Lord, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree³; that, having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in heaven, and uniting in His wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfection, He is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate and an all-sufficient Savior.⁴

¹ Ephesians 2:8; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24

² John 3:16; Matthew 18:11; Philippians 2:7; Hebrews 2:14

³ John 10:18; Philippians 2:8; Galatians 1:4; I Peter 2:24, 3:18; Isaiah 53:11; Hebrews 12:2

⁴ I Corinthians 15:20; Isaiah 53:12; Hebrews 7:25, 9:12-15; I John 2:2

Article IX

JUSTIFICATION

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in Him is Justification; that Justification includes the pardon of sin, and the gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness¹; that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done; but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed unto us.²

¹ Acts 13:39; Isaiah 53:11; Zechariah 13:1, Romans 5:1, 9, 8:1

² Titus 3:5-7; Romans 1:17, 4:1-8; Hebrews 2:4, 10:38; Galatians 3:11

Article X

THE FREENESS OF SALVATION

We believe in God's electing grace¹; that the blessings of salvation are made free to all through the gospel²; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent and obedient faith³; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel⁴; which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.⁵

¹ I Thessalonians 1:4; Colossians 3:12; I Peter 1:2; Titus 1:1; Romans 8:29-30

² Matthew 11:28; Isaiah 55:1, Revelation 22:17; Romans 10:13; John 6:37

³ Isaiah 55:6; Acts 2:38

⁴ Isaiah 55:7; John 3:15-16, 5:40; I Timothy 1:15; I Corinthians 15:10; Ephesians 2:4-5

⁵ John 3:18, 36

Article XI

GRACE IN REGENERATION OR THE NEW CREATION

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again¹; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus²; that it is instantaneous and not a process³; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God.⁴ That the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel⁵; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life.⁶

¹ John 3:3

² II Corinthians 5:17

³ Luke 5:27; I John 5:1; John 3:6-7; Acts 2:41, 16:30-33

⁴ II Peter 1:4; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1; II Corinthians 5:19; Colossians 2:13

⁵ John 1:12-13, 13:8

⁶ Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 5:9

Article XII

REPENTANCE AND FAITH

We believe that Repentance and Faith are solemn obligations¹, and also inseparable graces², wrought in our soul by the quickening Spirit of God³; thereby, being deeply convicted of our guilt, danger and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession and supplication for mercy⁴; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ and openly confessing Him as our only all-sufficient Savior.⁵

¹ Acts 20:21

² Mark 1:15

³ Acts 2:27-38

⁴ Luke 18:13; Romans 10:13; Psalms 51:1-4, 7; Isaiah 55:6-7

⁵ Luke 12:8; Romans 9:11

Article XIII

SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification has a two fold meaning; that of setting apart of things, days or persons specifically for God, and that the believer at the time of his regeneration is so set apart by God the Father¹; the progressive work of the Holy Spirit whereby the believer, obedient to the Word of God experiences the power of the indwelling Christ for holiness of life and victory over the old nature, which work will be completed when the believer stands in Christ's presence.²

¹ I Corinthians 1:30, Hebrews 10:10, 14

² Colossians 1:26-28; John 17:17; I Thessalonians 5:23; II Corinthians 3:18

Article XIV

THE PERSEVERANCE AND PRESERVATION OF THE SAINTS

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end¹; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors²; that a special Providence watches over their welfare³; and that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto eternal salvation.⁴

¹ John 8:31-32; Colossians 1:21, 23

² I John 2:19; Matthew 13:19-20

³ Romans 8:28; Matthew 6:30; Psalms 121:3; Hebrews 1:14

⁴ I Peter 1:5; Philippians 1:6; John 10:28-29, 16:8; Romans 8:35-39

Article XV

THE CHURCH

We believe that a church of Christ is a congregation of immersed believers associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the gospel¹, observing the ordinances of Christ²; governed by His laws³; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His word⁴; that its' scripturally designated officers are pastors (elders) and deacons, whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures⁵; we believe the true mission of the church is found in the great commission; first, to make individual disciples; second, to baptize them; third, to teach and instruct, as He has commanded⁶. We do not believe in the reversal of this order; we hold that the local church has the absolute right of self government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations, and that the one and only superintendent is Christ, through the Holy Spirit⁷; that it is scriptural for true churches to co-operate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the gospel; that every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its co-operation⁸; on all matters of membership, of polity, of government, of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final.⁹

¹ Acts 2:41-42

² Acts 2:42; I Corinthians 11:2

³ Ephesians 1:22-23

⁴ Ephesians 4:11; I Corinthians 12:4, 8-11

⁵ Acts 6:5-6, 14:23, 15:23, 20:17-28; I Timothy 3:1-13

⁶ Matthew 28:19-20

⁷ Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 5:23-24; I Peter 5:1-4

⁸ Acts 15:22; Jude 3-4; I Corinthians 16:1-2; II Corinthians 8:23-24; Malachi 3:10; Leviticus 27:32

⁹ I Corinthians 5:11-13, 6:1-3

Article XVI

BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that Christian Baptism is the believer's immersion in water¹; into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost²; to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem our faith in the crucified, buried and risen Savior, with its' effect in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life³; that in scriptural order it (baptism) precedes the privileges of church membership and is the public recognition of the Lordship of Jesus Christ⁴; the Lord's Supper is a memorial service in which the elements of bread and wine remind us of the love of God in Christ Jesus, *who spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all*. That this ordinance is to be observed in anticipation of His coming and preceded always by solemn self-examination.⁵

¹ Acts 8:36-39; Matthew 3:6, 16; John 3:23; Romans 6:4-5

² Matthew 28:19

³ Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12

⁴ Acts 2:41-42; Matthew 28:19-20

⁵ I Corinthians 11:23-28; Romans 8:32

Article XVII

CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society¹; that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed²; except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ³; who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the coming Prince of the kings of the earth.⁴

¹ Romans 13:1-7; II Samuel 23:3; Exodus 18:21-22

² Acts 23:5; Matthew 22:21; Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13-14, 17

³ Acts 4:19-20, 5:29, Daniel 3:17-18

⁴ Matthew 10:28, 23:10; Revelation 10:6; Philippians 2:10-11; Psalms 72:11

Article XVIII

THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED

We believe that there are radical and essential differences between the righteous and the wicked¹; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem²; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse³; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost.⁴

¹ Malachi 3:18; Genesis 18:23; Romans 6:17-18; Proverbs 11:31; I Peter 4:18

² Romans 1:17, 6:16; I Corinthians 15:22; Acts 10:34-35; I John 2:29, 3:7

³ Romans 6:16, I John 5:19; Galatians 3:10; Romans 6:23, 7:6

⁴ Proverbs 14:32; Luke 16:25; Matthew 7:13-14, 25:34, 41; John 8:21, 12:25; Luke 9:26

Article XIX

THE RESURRECTION, RETURN OF CHRIST AND RELATED EVENTS

We believe in: the Bodily Resurrection¹, the Ascension², the High Priesthood³, the Second Coming⁴, the Resurrection of the Righteous Dead⁵, the Change of the Living in Christ⁶, on the Throne of David⁷, His Reign on Earth.⁸

¹ Matthew 28:6-7; Luke 24:2, 4-6, 39; John 20:27; I Corinthians 15:4; Mark 16:6

² Acts 1:9, 11; Luke 24:51; Mark 16:19; Hebrews 8:1, 12:2; Revelation 3:21

³ Hebrews 2:17, 5:9-10, 8:6; I Timothy 2:5; I John 2:1

⁴ John 14:3; Acts 1:11; I Thessalonians 4:16; Matthew 24:27, 42, 25:13; James 5:8; Hebrews 9:28

⁵ I Thessalonians 4:16; I Corinthians 15:42-44, 52

⁶ I Corinthians 15:51-53; I Thessalonians 4:17; Philipians 3:20-21

⁷ Luke 1:32, Acts 2:29-30; Isaiah 9:6-7

⁸ I Corinthians 15:25; Isaiah 11:4-5, 32:1; Psalms 72:8; Revelation 20:1-4, 6